

**Abstract 375**

**TITLE:** Effective Collaborations for HIV Prevention in Diverse Communities

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**ISSUE:** HIV prevention in diverse communities where residents are at high risk, especially in urban areas, poses a challenge for projects that have minimal resources. Some of the barriers confronted include difficulty gaining access to diverse populations, mistrust of staff of traditional service-providing organizations among consumers, and the need to provide interventions to large numbers of individuals over time. Effective collaborations can address these barriers and maximize resources.

**SETTING:** The projects conducted target various high risk populations in four of New Jersey's cities: Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, and New Brunswick.

**PROJECT:** Utilizing collaborations among AIDS service providers, community-based organizations, and individual "innovators" in communities, Project POW! (Prevention Outreach Works) engages in targeted outreach; offers health education and risk reduction activities and prevention case management services; and prepares peer leaders in the community to work, with professional support, to devise strategies and interventions that meet the ongoing needs of the target populations.

**RESULTS:** Collaborations have provided access to "hard to reach" populations, cross-disciplinary and more creative approaches to service delivery, increased diversity of staff, elimination of duplications in administrative costs, sharing of resources, and the building of capacities among grass-roots organizations and communities to offer prevention interventions.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** To function as a collaborative team, all participants must work towards minimizing territorialism, balancing power among them, and resolving administrative problems, e.g. issues of supervision, budgeting, and conflicts with individual agency missions. However, by following procedures and guidelines developed through the project, collaboration can be a highly effective strategy for long-term impact on affected communities.

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